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REASONS

FOR

A Limited Expectation

OF

WOOL.

W O O L L  
O F  
A Limited Exportation  
F O R  
R E A S O N S

Printed in the Year 1877.

**R**eflecting with great resentment on the  
 first complaints of the Landlords and  
 Tenants of this Nation, who attribute  
 one of the greatest originals of their misery to  
 the cheapness of their Wooll; I began to think  
 of some remedy to this disease, which tho't is  
 not in my power to cure, yet to propose the  
 means to such as can, I am not forbid. But  
 finding my design opposed by several Pamphlets  
 under the name of W.C. and chiefly by one he  
 calls Englands Interest, I have here endea-  
 vour'd to winnow his handful of Corn from the  
 abundance of Chaff, and reducing his whole dis-  
 course to a few propositions with some objections  
 and answers, I do willingly grant him those  
 which follow.

1. **S**INCE the time of E. 3. (the founder of the Woollen-  
 manufacture) the trade of Wooll hath bin one of the  
 chiefest riches of this Nation: it employs many per-  
 sons, brings many profitable returns, encourages the  
 Shipping, &c.

2. On the contrary, the diminution of this manufacture is  
 disadvantageous to many Families and to the Nation, by not  
 making the greatest advantage of the superfluity of a Native  
 commodity, &c. and this he granted.

Yet I cannot acknowledge that a Manufacture maketh fewer poor, but rather the contrary. For tho it sets the poor on work where it finds them; yet it draws still more to the place, and their Masters allow wages so mean, that they are onely preserved from starving whilst they can work; when Age, Sicknes, or Death comes, themselves, their Wives, or their Children, are most commonly left up on the Parish. Which is the reason why those Towns (as in the *Weald of Kent*) whence the Clothing is departed, have fewer poor then they had before.

3. The profit arising by the Transportation of a Manufacture is much greater (supposing equal vent) then that of unwrought materials. Art increaseth the value so much as the thing wrought is more useful, and the working laborious.

4. The transportation of wooll is a benefit to others (as all things vended to Foreigners are, who else would not buy them) it increaseth their Manufactures, giving other Nations the advantages we wish our selves; and particularly it much profits the *French*, helping them to work out their own course wooll, &c.

5. It were therefore to be wished, and all endeavours ought to be used, that our superfluous wooll (which we spend not our selves) might be vended in manufacture, and not in the crude material. Tho I cannot be informed this was ever yet done in *England*, yet I wish honest industrious Workmen would bring it to pass.

II. But all these being granted, the question still remains, Whether since the manufacture of our superfluous Wooll cannot be vended abroad, it were not better to permit the wooll unwrought to be transported, with such limitations as may be least detrimental to the Kingdom?

*And this we affirm:*

1. Because otherwise a profitable commodity will be utterly wasted, and so not the manufacturer only, but the Farmer and Landlord also, will be so very much damaged; that the one

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cannot pay his rent, nor the other sustain the Taxes. And is not this the chiefest, if not the sole reason of sinking our Rents, throwing up Farmes, and the misery of the whole Country? Now that it is the greatest Concern and Interest of the Nation, to preserve the Nobility, Gentry, and those to whom the Land of this Country belongs, at least much greater than a few Artificers employed in working the superfluity of our Wooll, or the Merchants who gain by the exportation of our Manufacture, is manifest. 1. Because they are Masters and Proprietaries of the foundation of all the wealth in this Nation, all profit arising out of the Ground, which is theirs. 2. Because they bear all the Taxes and publick burthens; which in truth are onely born by those who buy and sell not; all sellers raising the price of their commodities, or abating of their goodness, according to their Taxes. 3. Because they maintain great Families, which conduce much to the consumption of our Manufactures, many people relying upon them, and perhaps as many as upon Cloth working. 4. Because they must of necessity bear all Magistracies and public Employments (how burthensome soever) and are the onely hindrances of the confusion which would follow upon equality. Whereas ordinary working persons may, if one employment fail, presently undertake another without any great inconvenience or detriment. Now then suppose Wooll fall to 3d. per Pound (as it must in a short time if not prevented) the price of all Land in *England* must likewise fall; there being not one Acre which produceth not Wooll (plowed lands at least from Harvest to Seed-time, and longer when they lie fallow) consequently the Taxes (which now are generally on Land, and ever proportioned to Rent, the ancient manner of taxing by 10ths. and 15ths. being of late out of use, much to the advantage of the Usurer, but to the prejudice of the Country Gentleman) will be also lessened when they come into the Kings Coffers: yet the constant charges

charges of the Kingdom do not lessen. Therefore our Taxes must be still oftener renewed, and the Landlords charge yet more increased, but his means of discharging diminished; and he must pay the more, the more he is disabled. A hard case, yet inevitable, unless the King and Parliament please to apply a speedy remedy. Thus must our Nobility and Gentry be forced to live at a meaner rate (who live alas too meanly in their Countries already) break up House-keeping, maintain fewer Servants, less Hospitality, &c. which has already somewhat, and will in time as eminently, lessen the Kingdom as transportation of Wooll, or perhaps any one thing can do.

2. By hindering exportation of Wooll pray y<sup>r</sup> consider the great loss this poor Nation sustains. I shall instance in *Romney* and its neighbouring Levels, which contain about 44000 Acres; each Acre one with another in *Romney* Marsh feeds three Sheep (besides other Stock) at the least: suppose then we rate the whole Level thus; there will be found 132000 Sheep, whereof 300 Fleeces will at the least make 4 Packs of good Wooll (240 pounds to the pack,) so then there are yearly shorn 1760 Packs, each of which were formerly constantly sold for 12 *l*. In the year 1647, when Exportation of Wooll was first prohibited, it was sold for 15 *l*. the year after by reason of the great Rot added to the mighty destruction of Sheep in the Wars, it was sold for 16 *l*. per Pack; but the Mortality of Sheep being recovered, yet the Prohibition continuing, Wooll has almost every year since abated of its price; and now there are divers persons, who have 4 and some 5 years Wooll upon their hands, not being able to get above 4 *d*. or 5 *d*. per Pack, that is 4 or 5 *l*. a Pack for it; and I hear it has been sold this very year in some places for 3 *l*. 10 *s*. per Pack. Thus by the most modest computation, and such as no man can gainsay, there is lost upon every pack of Wooll 7 *l*. which supposing all the wooll of that Level sold, it is evident 12320 *l*. is quite lost every year in that little place only, which is very

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near 6 s. per Acre throo the whole Level lost in the Rent. By which pray y<sup>e</sup> judge how many Millions are yearly lost throo all *England* by this want of a limited Exportation. Who then can shew so much cruelty as to blame poor people, who to prevent some of this damage do adventure to help themselves by Exportation? tho they had much rather be content with a moderate price in their own Country.

And truly 'tis no wonder that *W.C.* complains of the difficulty and impossibility of hindering Exportation, yet glories of his diligence in ruining so many poor and industrious persons for doing what he confesseth impossible to hinder. But our Superiours may conclude, since 'tis either impossible, or extreme difficult, to hinder Exportation, and that there may arise troubles (as some have been killed) for endeavouring it, it is much better and more natural to permit Exportation under the most advantageous terms their wisdom shall think fit. For in truth is it not very absurd to imagine, because we cannot make so much of our wooll as possibly may be made, that therefore we must make nothing of it? Like some perverse and obstinate Landlords, who chuse rather to lose all their Rent then abate the least part of it.

3. A limited Exportation will be more for the advantage of our own woollen trade (and less for that beyond Sea, then the hindering of it has been: For if strangers might come hither to buy wooll, tho they bought greater quantities, yet should they pay dearer for it then they do at present: and the dearer their Commodities, the dearer must they sell their Manufacture consequently the more easily we may beat them out of their Trade. For when a poor man (none else now will venture to transport it) comes with a Freight of wooll into *France* or elsewhere, they make him take their own price for it; his necessities and his danger forbid him carrying home his Merchandize, as well as staying there to contend for a better price: but being slenderly paid for his Charges, and little or nothing for his pains and hazard, returning thinks he comes  
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off very well whilest undiscovered. Yet to have the names of Merchants, and to gain perhaps sometimes more then 12 d. a day, to live with more ease tho with greater hazard, possibly some may still be invited to continue this Traffick notwithstanding any the severest Prohibition. After this manner strangers now, and will hereafter, have our wooll almost as cheap as our selves can buy it. But were the Trade laid open, *Englishmen* might still buy their wooll at reasonable prices, but strangers must pay the dearer for it; as the Custom, Officers Fees, Freight, Factorage, and other charges amount unto: which will perhaps be equal to the first peny paid for the wooll it self. Thus strangers shall pay twice as much for our wooll as the *English* Clothier, who therefore may undersell them, and make more advantage in the price of his Cloth by the Exportation of wooll, then ever he did by the Prohibition of it.

4. My next reason against the hindering Exportation of wooll is, because by our Forefathers it never was prohibited, unless upon some great occasion, and for some small time, till *Anno* 1647, and then also upon pretence that there was not wooll enough to furnish our own necessities. Which (if true) might be because of the great destruction of sheep by the wars. Yet there seems to be another ground for that Act: The Government of that time having been assisted in the Civil Wars by great numbers of the Wooll workmen, (who liked much better to rob and plunder for half a Crown a day, then toil at a melancholy work for six Pence a day) to encourage and reward them, I say, and to weaken the Gentry, they made this Prohibition. But to make this reason good, let us run over the whole History, or as much as we can find, either in our Acts of Parliament or creditable Historians concerning this Wooll business, and with all convenient brevity.

§. 1. Tho there were several Ordinances concerning wooll in other Kings Reigns, yet the Prince did not seriously begin to set himself to make the best advantage of wooll till the ninth  
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of *Edward* the third, at which time all wool-workers were invited to come and settle in *England*, to have places assign'd them, many privileges and liberties granted, and wages from the King, till they could gain a livelihood by their art, &c. whereupon many *Flemings* and others; chiefly Subjects to the Duke of *Burgundy*, repaired hither, and set up the manufacture of wool in *England*.

§. 2. 11. *E. 3. c. 4.* It was made felony to carry wooll out of the Realm, till otherwise ordain'd. This prohibition (saith *Speed*) was made to shew the *Flemings* the necessity they had of leagu- ing with *England*, as soon after they did; and the prohibition was taken off; or, as *Walsingham* saies, to humble the *Flemings*; *qui plus saccos quam Anglos venerabantur*. The same year it was enacted (no doubt for the better vending their wooll, the Ex- portation whereof being prohibited, made it of small value at home) that none should wear other then *English* Cloth, except the *King*, *Queen*, and their Children. But persons of such degrees might use forein furs, and face part of their garments with Silk. Also that no beyond Sea Cloths should be brought into *Eng- land*; and that forein Cloth-workers should have several privi- leges. Whereupon (says *Speed*) many presently came over.

§. 2. 14. *E. 3.* Was granted to the King the 9th Lamb, 9th Fleecce, and 9th Sheaf for two Years: also 40s upon every sack of Wooll and 40s upon every 300 Woolfels transpor- ted; (some say also that not long before this, was granted to the *King* half the wooll of the Communalty, and nine marks upon every sack of Wooll of the Clergy.) By these great subsidies it is probable the King had great quantity of Wooll upon his hands; and about this time the *King* sent the *Bishop* of *Lincoln* into *Flanders* with 10000 sacks of Wooll; which he sold for 20 pounds Sterling a Sack. (*Knigh-ton*.) And in his fifteenth year ordained, that no Merchant or other should carry any Woolls out of the Realm till after *Michael- mus* (by which time it is probable he had sold his own;) but after that every Merchant, Stranger, or other, might free-



ly buy and export his Wooll, paying the due customs; and that those who had Woolls, should be compelled to sell them according to the price and sort in the Country; to accomplish the Woolls granted to the *King*, which afterwards was disannulled.

§. 4. 23. *E. 3.* The *King* stopt the Woolls in the land till the Merchants had fined with him for the same. (*Holinsh.*) 26. *E. 3.* the staple was brought to *London*, to the loss of the Merchants, but advantage to the *King* who got by it 1200 pounds that year. *Knighton.*

§. 5. 27. *E. 3.* This year a great advantage befel the Nation; for (because the young Earl of *Flanders* married not with the *King's* Daughter as he had promised, but with the Daughter of *France*: or because the *Flemings* observed not the agreements, which the *King* made in the life-time of *Faques de Arteville*, who procured of the *King* that the Marts might be kept in several Towns in *Flanders*) the *King* removed the Staples and Marts of wooll from the *Earls* Towns, establishing them in several Towns of *England*, *Newcastle*, *Canterbury*, &c. Some of which, not being Port-Towns, he afterwards changed for such: and withall regulated the whole trade with certain ordinances; for which I refer you to the Statutes.

§. 6. 27. *E. 3.* 50s were given to the *King* by Act of Parliament on every sack of wooll transported. By which grant it was thought the *King* received 1000 marks *per diem*, *Holin.*

§. 7. 37. *E. 3.* The Staple was removed to *Callice*; putting the Town into the hands of certain Merchants, (that the Trade might be the more secure for them.) And not long after it was again returned to Towns in *England*; but most of them Port-Towns, for it was very usual to remove the Staples. *Holin.* 38. *Ed. 3.* was granted to the *King* 26s. 8d of every sack of wooll transported for 3 years.

§. 8. What was ordained by our succeeding Princes was either in conformation or regulation of what was already established: according to the advantage of the *King* and People:

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But that is very remarkable which is recorded by *Hen. de Knighton* 14. R. 2. being a case somewhat like ours at this present. He describing a great dearth and calamity of the poor in this Nation, tho there was Corn enough laid up in private hands to serve the whole Nation five years ; neither was the Corn then at any extraordinary price ; at last gives the reason of it to be want of money, and this he ascribes to the not vending our wooll ; whereof he saies some men had 3, others 4 years wooll upon their hands : tho now there be many who have five years wooll unfold. And this came to pass, saith he, because the *English* Merchants were forbid transporting wooll : wherefore the year following liberty was granted them to transport wooll whither they pleased. In those daies, saith he, wooll was so cheap that a stone of the best chosen wooll was sold for 3s and in *Leister* for 2s or 20 pence. Now three shillings in those daies was as much as 9s at present ; and therefore dearer by 2s a stone then it is sold for at present, 6s being a good price at this time.

§. 9. 8. H. 6. An act was made to regulate the Merchant-strangers, who exported our wooll, and *An. 27. H. 6.* it was decreed, that till our Cloths were accepted in *Brabant*, no merchandice growing or wrought there should be brought into *England* upon pain of forfeiture.

§. 10. 3. E. 4. An act was made concerning exportation of wooll, and then it was likewise ordered that no Cloth wrought beyond Sea should be brought into *England* : none should buy woolls (except he wrought it himself) till after *Bartholomew-tide* ; and 22 H. 8. not till after the Ascension of our Lady : nor a stranger before the Purification ; no woollen yarn or cloth should be exported unfull'd ; and 3. H. 8. none undressed. And *an. 1. of Queen Mary*, as also in the first of *Queen Elizabeth* their Parliaments gave them 33s 4d on every sack of wooll, and every 240 woollfells transported by a Native, & 3 pound 6s 8d on the same transported by strangers ; and this to continue during their lives.

§. 11. *An. 1. Fac.* A subsidy upon wooll transported was granted the *King* for his life-time, a Denizon was to pay 33s 3d a stranger 3 pound 6s 8d for every sack. And there has not been a Prince from *Ed. 3.* to *Ch. 1.* who have not gained considerable revenues by the exporting wooll.

III. Out of which collections you may observe:

1. That the wooll-trade beyond Sea was alwaies accounted a very great advantage both to the *King* and Subjects. Which was the reason why it was so carefully managed, and more laws about it then any one subject whatsoever. Nay scarce has there been any Parliament, since the beginning of *E. 3.* wherein somewhat hath not been established concerning it.

2. That no absolute prohibition of exporting it was ever enacted till the Reign of *Char. 1.* nor then till 1647. at which time neither would he be said to Reign. Temporary ones indeed there have been ; but those of ill consequence to the Nation.

3. That sumptuary laws concerning wearing, vending our Cloth, and the like, were always enacted *pari passu* with those concerning wooll-working. For it is very advantageous to the Kingdom, that much of it should be spent here, whereby many workmen would be maintained, and less forein unnecessary trifles imported, which now take away much of our money.

4. That it was thought sufficient advantage to the Nation that they might buy wooll when and where they pleased ; but whatsoever wooll was sold, ( by Strangers especially, ) was not sold till after a certain time fixed. That it was not to be bought by Brokers ; that what was bought by foreigners to be exported paid greater duties then what was bought by the Natives. which cautions alone, if well regulated, would render the exportation at this day very advantageous ; certainly much more then to let it putrefie and moth-eat in our store-houses.

5. My next reason for the permission of Exportation is, because

cause it will better his Majesties customes : for it being impossible absolutely to hinder the exportation, (Men naturally inclining to run any hazard rather than apparent beggary, by suffering their goods to perill in their hands) the customs must of necessity be lessend. What perishes unwrought, and what is exported by stealth, pay no custom. But besides this, it was the frequent use of our Fathers to help the Prince and ease the Subject by imposing taxes upon the wooll Exported. Sometimes 50s a pack, sometimes more, as occasion required, which was the ordinary way ; being also a most easy one, of gratifying the Prince. If it be answered the customes would advance much more if the wooll were exported in manufacture, we confesse and seriously desire, that our wooll were manufactured, and so exported and sold. Tho this was never yet done in *England*, nor do I think can be : But our question here is concerning our superfluous wooll, which remains after we have here made, or vended what we can ; after the Cloth-market is finished ; or our workmens hands all imployed.

6. The reason of the decay of Clothing is not exportation of wooll as *W. C.* supposes, but the contrary. For the decay (if any be) is since this prohibition : so that by hindring this we apply a wrong remedy to the disease. But it proceeds from diverse other causes ; as first, because other Nations have of late improved their manufactures, as we did in *Edward* the thirds time, the *Dutch* ever since 1616, the *French* now lately, both of them working very accurately, if not more, then our selves, as well as more honestly, by the confession of those of our own Nation. Secondly, Cloth is not so much worne in these parts of the World as formerly, it not being now so convenient a wear as when our fashions were constant. Our Clothes then were made strong to endure many years, and a great part of the great mens inventories then were their ward-robes left as Legacies to their best Friends and Children, who did not despise to wear the Clothes of their Ancestors : where-

whereas now the Mode hardly enduring two months, slight stufes are fufficient. Besides, when the custom was for men to wear gowns, cloaks, and other loose garments, substantial Cloath was more proper then now it is, for little breeches and a close coat. To second which humor of the times Silks and Stuffs are imported in greater abundance, sold at easier rates then formerly, and manufactures of them set up in our own Nation; by which the beautifullest and lightest garments are become almost the cheapest also: Which I fear will render it difficult to reconcile the mode to Cloth, tho much to be desired. Thirdly, we have more Sheep in *England* then formerly, because of the drayning the fens and other grounds; and the laying down of Tillage, for the cheapness of Corn till these two late years. Fourthly, *Irish* Cattle being prohibited, they breed more Sheep, and bring in more wooll into *England*, besides what they send beyond Sea: which will infallibly bring our lands in *England* as low as those in *Ireland*, i. e. to as low a rent, and to as few years value in the purchase, nay lower: if they be suffered, First to glut *England* with their wooll, and then to furnish the markets beyond sea; yet we prohibited the same privilege: which is our present condition. And undoubtedly the forbidding *Irish* Cattle has been of vast inconvenience, not only to the best of *England*, the feeding-lands; but to it all in general, by lessening the value of our Wooll: in which even the breeding lands receive more loss by the low price of their wooll, then they reap advantage by this Act in the price of their Cattle. This Act also is injurious to the Nation by sending our own and forein Merchant Ships to Victual in *Ireland*; by the want of returns from thence, by loss of our Trade for Hops, Hides, Butter, Cheese, &c. which trades now are taken up by the *Irish* to the ruine of many Counties of *England*; by discouraging Navigation; for it is said 100 of our Ships were continually employed in this Traffick of lean Cattle. And lastly by discouraging our Clothiers and other manufactures; who since they



they must live out of their labours, the dearer they pay for their diet the more they must have for their work. This *Irish* Act therefore making our Beef dear, yet the *Dutch* having it from *Ireland* delivered in *Holland* for about a peny a pound, they may afford their Cloth cheaper then possibly we can: which will speedily enable them to get from us also our forein Clothing-trade, and be an irreparable damage to this Kingdom: if the Parliament in their wisdom do not prevent it. Thus this Act, which in its preface designs the advancing our rents & enriching *England*, has lessened and impoverished both; has compelled *Ireland* to seek a way to live without us, has made it almost independent of *England*; has infine almost ruined both Nations: but to our purpose. Fifthly, I omit the many deceits in Cloth-making, which *W.C.* confesseth to have been of late so very much practised, that our Clothes lose greatly of their ancient reputation beyond sea to the infinite prejudice of our Trade: and I have been informed that this was the first occasion which put the *French* upon making Clothes and Sruffs of their own. But for the various abuses of this kind I refer you to a little Book called the *Golden Fleece*, by *W.S.* and I am informed that the *Dutch*, taking occasion from our dishonest work-manship; have vended their own worst Cloth for right *English* Cloth; and thereby have got from us much of our trade, and great reputation to themselves. Sixthly, the Sword, Plague, forein Colonies, and repeopling *Ireland* have of late years much diminished our stock of People: therefore the consumption of the commodities is less, for if we do not vend our wooll-manufactures, the reason must be, either because we make more of them, or because there is less of them used then formerly. If we make more (as some with good reason think we do) the trade increaseth; and tho it being in many hands, particular persons grow not so rich, yet the Clothing in general flourisheth, and the greater numbers are set on work. But the contrary to this *W.C.* seems to affirm. He must therefore grant we want vent for our Cloth when

when made. But will the prohibiting exportation cause more vent? if the *Dutch* can work cheaper, better, and more honestly then we, will they not undersell us, and steal away our trade? If the *French* can make stuffs of their own (as both they and the *Dutch* do) without our wooll, and prohibit our Cloth to be sold amongst them, shall we force them to buy of us? If the *Italians* and *French* make and sell multitudes of fine and gaudy silks at a cheap rate, can we persuade people not to prefer them? But if we want either hands to work the vast stocks of our own wooll, and that which daily overwhelms us from *Ireland*, or vent to dispose of it, what must become of the superfluity of our wooll? Must the Farmer and Grazier bear all the loss? No, the Landlord must abate of his rent, or the Farm thrown into his hands; the Tenant being poor, half ruined by his losses, his Landlord takes the farm, and at length having to his Tenants misfortunes, added those inconveniencies of intrusting servants, &c. He must split on the same rock; his wooll lies on his hands till he comes into debt; and in fine the farm must be sold, since the wooll bears no price. But the yearly value is so much fallen, and there is so much land to be sold on the same score, that he despairs of a chapman, &c. And this is our present condition.

7. This beating down the price of wooll is prejudicial even to the Manufacturers themselves; because if wooll be cheap, the product of it must be so too. Cloth must bear a proportion to the value of wooll: or if it doth not, the disadvantage is on the Clothiers side; his commodity being ever cryed down beyond measure when wooll is cheap. Besides the less money a tradesman turns for the same commodity, the less must be his gains. The Clothier then making the same quantity of Cloth as formerly, and as good, selling it for less, has none to revenge himself on but the Grazier, and the poor workman, who must then work harder or abate of his already too poor wages. Who then gains by this cheapness? they

they only who are so eager against the Exportation of Wooll ; a sort of Men, who call themselves Merchants of the Staple , but are in truth only Brokers : (those Caterpillars of trade, and sworn Enemies to poor Men ; who make their chief gain of other mens necessities,) these are sure to get both by buyer and seller, whosoever loses. To the Clothier they complain that there is no vent for Cloth, that Wooll is so cheap they may have Cloth for nothing, till they have bought it at their own rates : but when they come to sell it to the Draper or Merchant, they then change their note. Wooll so dear that poor Clothiers can hardly go to the price of it, &c. These and a thousand other artifices they use to scrape from both sides.

IV. To some of these reasons *W. C.* pretends to answer, tho in such a manner as 'tis hard to conceive what the Man would say. To what has been said concerning the Farmer and Graziers not being able to pay their rent, &c. From which so many ill consequences follow ; I think he answers, that the principal commodity, out of which they raise their rent, is not wooll but the Carcase and Corn; and that the more Men are set on work, the more corn and flesh is spent, so the farmers and graziers mouths are made up that way. To which it is easily replied, that a Farmer makes not up his rent out of his principal, but all, his commodities : and it is an ill argument, this is not the principal advantage or profit, therefore you may part from it. Besides Farmers have families also, which must be maintained, their Widows must not be starved, nor their Daughters married without some portions. Suppose the smaller profits be laid aside for these : yet let me tell you that a Grazier, whose stock does not consist more then usually of beasts, must pay at least half, and in some Counties all, his Rent with the price of his Wooll ; or he will live very uncomfortably. But in that great rot which happened about 5 years ago, in most part of *England* (and the like may happen again, for which some provision ought to be made in good years) I beseech you, which was the principal commodity :

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What was the flesh worth? And for Corn; the low price of wooll hath, made so many apply to husbandry, that usually corn do's hardly bear any price wherewith to pay his rent. What he saies of the great number of people set on work upon the superfluous Wooll, that would make flesh and Corn dear, is surely in mockery of the poor laborious Farmers and Graziers. Who presently imagine some great Inundation of new men like Locusts, yet with money in their purses, that would presently buy up and devour all the fruits of the ground and even their wooll also for their backs, as well as victuals for their bellies. But upon examination they'll find no encrease of Men by this mighty manufacture; but some few hands, now employed in other work, to turn to weaving, spinning, &c. They'll find no more bellies nor backs then formerly, and their corn at as low a price as it was before. Corn I say, for the Clothiers wages will not much enrich either Butcher or Grazier.

2. Another objection against what has been said, is the great number maintained by the wooll-manufacture: four fifths of the Nation saith *W. C.* which except he take in the Farmers & Graziers is an extravagant proportion. But this objection is wholly impertinent. It is not material to the point in hand how many are maintained by wooll-work, but how many more would be maintained by working up the superfluous wooll, that, I mean, which either perishes or is clandestinely exported. And these are not so many as the maintenance ought, in any wise, to be put in ballance either with the Farmers and Graziers, or Gentry and Land-lords of this Nation.

The Cloth for our own use we still spend, and the Merchants transport more to some Countries then formerly: so that our loss is only what was usually sent into *France* and *Holland*. *W. C.* saies four fifths of the Nation are concerned in the interest that wooll be not exported. *London* it self contains about 5 Millions, do you think any Child so simple as to believe 4 of these 5 millions are concerned about the Exportation of wooll? If he

he saies he means the whole woollen-trade, that also is false. But what is that to our question about superfluous wooll: let there be strict laws, and severely executed, for the use of wooll in our own Nation: let the *Irish* act for prohibiting importation of Cattle be repealed, that we may be no more oppressed with wooll from thence; and it would be found neither the number of workmen, nor of People will be lessened by exporting our superfluous wooll. Nay I make a great question, whether the number of workmen be lessened since the woollen-trade sickened, unless by some accident, he that considers the great number of Silk-workers now in the Nation, (a clothing not of that substance and duration as Cloth, therefore requires more hands, to supply us with new: and that Cloth-working, which was formerly confined to Corporations, is now frequent in Villages) will either be of my opinion, or suspend his assent to the contrary: and then what becomes of this great clamor of maintaining so many People, and so many poor? Since there are not so many loose by exportation of wooll, but they may easily betake themselves to other callings.

3. But concerning maintaining the Poor, I have said before; that where there is most manufacture there is either all-well, or for the most part, more poor: the reasons are plain. It is true indeed that the first introducing a manufacture employs many poor, but they cease not to be so, and the continuance of it makes many: and the departing of it to another place carries most of them with it. But the decay of it being insensible, the poor by degrees are otherwise provided for, and rather mend their fortunes then make them worse by the loss of their trade. But for the whole Nation, why is it not better to set up such a trade as wil employ all our working people, increase our Shipping, and enrich our Men, then to endeavour a thing impossible, (hindring exportation of Wooll?) force nature: ty up the Sea and Winds: to strive against the stream and current of the times: I mean the Herring-fishing, which will both make amends for the small decay of our cloth-



working, and revenge our selves against the *Dutch* for stealing our manufacture; by fairly and justly making use of our own liberty and power to which nature has by our situation so long invited us. Our Cloth-working may again return, as all things and all trades have their ebbs and flows. Were not our Archers in ancient times the great glory of the Nation? renowned for gaining many signal battels against our Enemies? what laws have we for importing bow-staves? and what great number of Families were maintained by that trade, &c. where as now neither are there Archers, nor bowyers, nor bowstaves, hardly in the whole Kingdom. I wish we do not too soon repent the disuse of those our famous weapons: to prevent which Q. *Eliz.* used her endeavour both by laws and encouragement (and to second her, Sir. *Tho. Smith* writ an ingenious book in commendation of Archery) the loss of which weapon I rather lament then hope to recover. But those workmen doubtless provided themselves other trades as Archery decayed: and this age feels no want of employment from that decay: neither will the next from that of clothing. But cloth may perhaps come again into request, and then the tattered, thin *Dutch*-cloth, the light searges of *France*, and the effeminate Silks of *Italy*, may be despised. Perhaps also (which I see his Majesty most prudently endeavours) some new trading place may be discovered, which may take of our Cloth in greater abundance then *France* or *Holland* did. Or if this happen not, yet by applying our selves to fishing, we shall in short time think our present failure an happy increase. Our wooll has ever been accounted the great riches of the Kingdom. By *Pol.* *Virgil* *England* is call'd *terra de lana*, and our wooll the Golden-fleece; by reason of the great quantity of Gold and Silver which came in yearly to buy it. Yet in the Sea at our doors lie greater treasures then in our wooll: if we were not so slothful as to suffer our neighbours to Rob us of it, whilst we stand idle spectators of our ruine.

4. It is also objected that the *French* and *Dutch* may in time work us out of trading in other parts by underselling us: they  
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undermine us, 'tis true, not by underselling us constantly, but by underselling us chiefly at first: and their trading being in societies and companies their losses are shared amongst so many, that a small one is hardly felt by any. wherefore if they find we have a settled trade in any place, they sell first to their own loss, and when by this means they have beaten us out, they raise their price higher then we did. Which prohibiting exportation will not hinder: there being no way of blowing up this mine of theirs, but by such a countermine of our own. If the *Dutch* have either more skill in making Cloth; or by faring more hardly, or by having provision cheaper from *Ireland*, and taking less freight, can afford their Cloth cheaper; they must of necessity in time beat us out of trade, unless we learn to work or live as they do. But if all the superfluous wooll had a good price, and good custome set upon it, would it not be a good antidote against this underselling us? I am sure it would against their underselling us by what they make of our wooll, and far better then endeavouring to force the stream and fighting with impossibility.

5. It has been demanded by some, since our Clothiers cannot work out our wools, what is become of the wooll which lay on the Graziers hands in *An. 1666.* at which time, say they, there was as great quantity unfold as at present. Tho this I might in part deny, yet I will grant, that great quantities did then lye upon our hands; because during the War and the plague there was little of it wrought in our own, and less exported into forein Countries; the King of *France* at that time commanded all the *English* wooll which came into his dominions (which was no small quantity) to be burnt for fear of infection. And therefore the War and Plague ceasing, our wooll was again in greater measure transported to foreiners then before. It cannot therefore be concluded that our Clothiers can manufacture all the Wooll of *England*, because at this juncture we had more, and afterwards less wooll upon our hands. But we still lose the point which is concerning superfluous

fluous wooll only, if the Clothiers can work it all, let them do it; we shall all rejoice at it, if they cannot, I hope they will acknowledge themselves unreasonable if they oppose what we request.

6. Lastly they urge that the *French* cannot make any, except very coarse Cloth, without our wooll. Which I deny and appeal to them, who know any thing of the South parts of *France*, whether they make not good Cloth at and about *Carcassonne*, *Bourge en Berry* and diverse other places without the help of our woolls? Some *Turky* Merchants know also, that their *Carcason* Cloth findes good prices, and many buyers in the *Lévant*. But grant it true, that they can make but little besides coarse cloth without our wooll, and suppose it were possible to keep our wooll from them; yet if they will be content to wear their own coarse cloth (as most certainly they will and must) rather then buy ours, what shall the not-exporting wooll advantage the Clothier or the Merchant? I would fain ask those who are so unwilling to have wooll exported, whether they will give security to take of all the wooll yearly growing in the Nation at a reasonable rate, suppose 10. pound *per* Pack: but if they refuse, let them not think it reasonable the poor *Grazier*, and *Farmer*, or indeed the *Landlord* must bear all the loss and damage. 'Tis to great a burthen on them, who already bear the chief and almost only burthen of the Nation.

V. For remedy of all the disorders in this matter, I shall propose nothing but what I conceive the laws of the Nation and Acts of Parliament enjoin. As,

1. That those who work up our wooll in *England* may buy when and where they please, and as cheap as they can.

2. That no broker or forestaller shall be suffered to buy wooll, but that it shall be bought either by the Clothier himself, or the Exporter; but not by any man to sell it again in *England* unless in such Towns as *Halifax*, &c. Where the poor workmen are not able to buy any considerable quantities, as formerly it was.

3. That

3. That no Merchant stranger shall be suffered to buy any Wooll till *All-Saints* or *St Martins-day*: but then any may buy and export what they please.

4. That every sack of Wooll, that is exported, shall pay such customes to the King as the Parliament in their wisdom shall think meet.

5. That no Man under such a degree as shall be judged meet shall wear other then woollen outward garments.

6. That all forain woollen and Silk-manufactures whatever be confiscate.

7. That provision be made for vending our Cloth beyond Sea: and a prohibition made of the Commodities coming from such Countries as refuse our Cloth; as the Parliament shall think fit, according to the example of former times.

8. That the *Irish* would be prevented from coming into *England*, unless in order to its sale to strangers.

9. That the multitude of Acts for Cloth-working be reduced into one plain, clear law remedying the innumerable abuses in Mingling, Carding, Spinning, Weaving, Scouring, Milling, Rowing, Tentring, Dying, &c. Which done, it will be easy to prevent exporting undressed and undyed Clothes. Of which *Sr. Walter Raleigh* justly complains, as prejudicial to the Kingdom.

10. That the *Colnager* may be countenanced in, and be put in mind of, duely executing his office: not suffering his seals to be sold by dozens to Clothiers and Shearman to fix to their own Clothes at their pleasure. without being measured or visited.

11. That no *English* man be permitted to set up for himself in relation to clothing till he have served 7 years apprenticeship at the trade. Which will lessen the out-cry of Clothiers for want of work, encourage honest and skilful work-men, and give credit to the employment, which now is disgraced by those whom ignorance, not an ill trade, reduces to a necessity, and finally it will give reputation to our Cloths) which for want

want of it have much lost their vent beyond sea as well as our own Nation.

12. That for encrease of our People a voluntary register be permitted, and liberty given to all strangers to buy lands to set up manufacture at their pleasure, and to live with freedom, liberty, and the privileges of *English* men. Following in this the excellent example of great *King Ed. 3d.* that there be care taken to prevent idleness, so frequent in this Nation since *Queen Elizabeths* Acts for relieving beggars, a thing most piously designed, yet proving an encouragement to the very and idleness, a charge to the industrious inhabitants of every Parish, and an injury to the whole Nation.

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